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ROBBINS & GREEN, P.A. 1 LAW OFFICES 2 3300 NORTH CENTRAL AVENUE **SUITE 1800** 3 PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85012-2518 TELEPHONE (602) 248-7600 4 FACSIMILE (602) 266-5369 Wayne A. Smith, #002973 5 Brian Imbornoni, #006894

Attorneys for

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BEFORE THE ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

AZ CORP COMMISSION Anzona Corporation Commission DOCKETED

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DOCKETED BY

In the matter of JOHN R. WALLRICH and JANE DOE WALLRICH, husband and wife. 10742 SW Heron Place Beaverton, OR 97007 Respondents.

Respondents

Docket No. S-03506A-02-0000

RESPONSE TO SECURITIES DIVISION'S MEMORANDUM OF LAW REGARDING EFFECT OF A.R.S. § 44-2031(C)

Respondents John R. Wallrich and Jennifer Wallrich ("Respondents"), through their attorneys, respectfully submit their response to the Memorandum of Law Regarding Effect of A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) ("Memorandum"), filed by the Securities Division ("Division") of the Arizona Corporation Commission ("Commission"). Respondents submit that A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) cannot be retroactively applied to subject Respondent Jennifer Wallrich to the jurisdiction of the Commission and to subject the Wallrich marital community to liability and penalties for securities violations allegedly committed by Respondent John R. Wallrich prior to the effective date of the statute. Respondents further submit that retroactive application of A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) to the claims alleged in this proceeding would violate the prohibition on ex post facto laws contained in the United States and Arizona Constitutions. Finally, even if A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) could be retroactively applied to this proceeding, the relief requested by the Division as against Respondent Jennifer Wallrich in her personal capacity exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission.

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A. Factual Background

On November 18, 2002, the Division filed its Notice of Opportunity for Hearing Regarding Proposed Order to Cease and Desist, for Restitution, for Administrative Penalties, and for Other Affirmative Action ("Notice"). The Division alleges in its Notice that Respondent John R. Wallrich committed violations of the Securities Act of Arizona, A.R.S. § 44-1801, et seq. ("Securities Act"), in connection with the sale of investment contracts involving Alpha pay telephones. (Notice, ¶¶ 12, 17, 22-28.) The Division alleges that these sales occurred between May of 2000 and May of 2001. (Notice, ¶¶ 17.)

In reliance upon A.R.S. § 44-2031(C), the Division has joined Respondent Jennifer Wallrich as a party to this proceeding. (Notice, ¶ 3.) The Division has requested the entry of a cease and desist order against Respondents John R. Wallrich and Jennifer Wallrich, and has requested an order for the payment of restitution and administrative penalties jointly and severally against both Respondents, and against their marital community. (Notice, § VII, ¶¶ 1-3.)

A.R.S. § 44-2031 was amended, effective August 22, 2002, to provide that: "[t]he commission may join the spouse in any action authorized by this chapter to determine the liability of the marital community." A.R.S. § 44-2031(C). The effect of this amendment was to provide the Commission with jurisdiction over the spouse of an alleged violator to determine the liability of the marital community. (See Memorandum, p. 3, lines 1-4.) The legislative act which amended A.R.S. § 44-2031 does not provide for retroactive application. See 2002 Ariz. Sess. Laws, Ch. 157.

B. <u>Legal Analysis</u>.

1. <u>Arizona Law Provides a Strong Presumption Against the Retroactive Application of Statutory Amendments.</u>

A.R.S. § 1-244 provides that, "[n]o statute is retroactive unless expressly declared therein." A.R.S. § 1-244. See State v. Griffin, 387 Ariz. Adv. Rep. 7, 58 P.3d 516, ¶ 7 (App. 2002). In other words, "§ 1-244 requires an express statement of retroactive intent before a statute will be considered retroactive." San Carlos Apache Tribe v. Superior Court, 193 Ariz. 195, 972 P.2d 179, ¶

14 (1999). Under § 1-244, "[u]nless a statute is expressly declared to be retroactive, it will not govern events that occurred prior to its effective date." State v. Coconino County Superior Court, 139 Ariz. 422, 678 P.2d 1386, 1391 (1984).¹

The Division does not cite or even acknowledge the existence of A.R.S. § 1-244 in its Memorandum. Instead, the Division argues that A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) may be retroactively applied in this proceeding because: (1) this action was commenced after the effective date of the statute; (2) the effect of A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) is purely procedural and does not affect substantive rights; and (3) the joinder of Jennifer Wallrich in this action is consistent with previously-enacted community property laws. (Memorandum, pp. 3-6.) These arguments fail as a matter of law.

2. The Division Seeks to Apply A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) Retroactively to the Conduct at Issue in this Proceeding.

The Division argues in its Memorandum that the Division is not seeking to apply A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) retroactively because, "[t]he statute became effective in August, and was already in effect when the Division filed the Notice." (Memorandum, p. 3, lines 17-19.) The Division cites no authority for this argument, nor could it. The law is clearly to the contrary.

It is well-settled in Arizona that the application of a statute is considered retroactive when the statute is applied to conduct which occurred prior to its effective date regardless of the date of commencement of proceedings. See State v. Griffin, 58 P.3d at 520 ("We look to the date of the offense, rather than the date of adjudication, to determine whether a statute is being retroactively applied."); In re Shane B., 198 Ariz. 85, 7 P.3d 94, ¶ 7 (2000) ("Courts look to the date of the offense, rather than the date of adjudication, to determine retroactivity of application."); State v. Noble, 171 Ariz. 171, 829 P.2d 1217, 1220 (1992) ("A law is retrospective if it 'changes the legal consequences of acts completed before its effective date.""); State v. Coconino County Superior Court, 139 Ariz. 422,

Similarly, A.R.S. § 1-246 provides that, in the criminal context, an "offender shall be punished under the law in force when the offense was committed." In addition, A.R.S. § 1-105(B) states that, "[w]hen an offense is committed prior to the time these Revised Statutes takes effect, the offender shall be punished under the law in effect when the offense was committed."

678 P.2d 1386, 1391 (1984) ("Unless a statute is expressly declared to be retroactive, it will not govern events that occurred before its effective date.").

Here, the Securities Division is seeking to apply an amendment to A.R.S. §44-2031 that became effective on August 22, 2002, to subject Respondent Jennifer Wallrich and the Wallrich marital community to jurisdiction and liability for securities violations that allegedly occurred between May of 2000 and May of 2001. (See Notice, ¶ 17.) Under well-settled Arizona law, the retroactivity of application of a statute is determined by the date of the alleged offense rather than the date of the adjudication. Therefore, the Securities Division's proposed application of A.R.S. §44-2031(C) to this proceeding would be retroactive regardless of the date of commencement of this proceeding.

3. A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) Affects Respondents' Substantive Rights and is Not Purely Procedural.

Under a judicially-created exception to A.R.S. § 1-244, a statute does not have an impermissible retroactive effect if it is merely procedural and does not affect an earlier established substantive right. In re Shane B., 7 P.3d at 96, ¶ 8; Bouldin v. Turek, 125 Ariz. 77, 607 P.2d 954 (1979); State v. Griffin, 58 P.3d at 523, ¶ 18. A substantive right is one that creates, defines and regulates rights while a procedural one prescribes the method of enforcing such rights or obtaining redress. In re Shane B., 7 P.3d at 97, ¶ 9; State v. Griffin, 58 P.3d at 523, ¶ 18; Allen v. Fisher, 118 Ariz. 95, 574 P.2d 1314, 1315 (App. 1977).

Retroactive application of A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) would significantly affect substantial substantive rights of the Respondents. Under Arizona law, it is well-settled that both spouses must be joined in an action in order to bind the marital community.² Here, the retroactive application of § 44-2031(C) would expand the rights and authority of the Commission by allowing it to exercise jurisdiction over both Jennifer Wallrich and the marital community existing between John R. Wallrich

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² <u>See</u> A.R.S. § 25-215(D) ("In an action on such a [community] debt or obligation the spouses shall be jointly sued . . ."); <u>Spudnuts, Inc. v. Lane</u>, 139 Ariz. 35, 676 P.2d 669, 670 (App. 1984) (judgment against one spouse does not bind the community); <u>Eng v. Stein</u>, 123 Ariz.343, 599 P.2d 796, 799 (1979) (spouse must be joined in action to foreclose community interest in real property).

and Jennifer Wallrich. This would have the effect of subjecting Respondents to new exposure and liability that did not exist at the time of the conduct alleged by the Division. This goes far beyond prescribing the method of enforcing legal rights, but instead, creates, defines and regulates new rights in favor of the Securities Division and against Respondents. The application of A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) to this action would affect Respondents' substantive rights, and therefore, is an impermissible violation of A.R.S. § 1-244.

The present case is analogous to numerous Arizona cases which have refused to extend

retroactive application to statutory amendments affecting the measure of damages or the liability of a party as the result of conduct which occurred before the date of the statutory amendment. See Aranda v. Industrial Com'n of Arizona, 198 Ariz. 467, 11 P.3d 1006, ¶ 27 (2000) (statute authorizing suspension of workers' compensation benefits to individuals convicted of crime and incarcerated is substantive and not procedural); Bouldin v. Turek, 125 Ariz. 77, 607 P.2d 954, 955 (1979) (statute providing for award of attorneys' fees is substantive and not procedural); State v. Griffin, 387 Ariz. Adv. Rep. 7, 58 P.3d 516, ¶ 29 (App. 2002) (statute creating status of prohibited possessor of firearms affects substantive rights); State v. Beasley, 198 Ariz. 559, 12 P.3d 234, ¶ 20 (App. 2000) (statute creating chronic felony offender status was substantive and not procedural); E.C. Garcia and Co. Inc. v. Arizona State Dept. of Revenue, 178 Ariz. 510, 875 P.2d 169, 178 (App. 1993) (statute rescinding right to refund of taxes paid under erroneous assessment affects substantive rights); Allen v. Fisher, 118 Ariz. 85, 574 P.2d 1314, 1316 (App. 1977) (statute abrogating collateral source rule in medical malpractice actions is substantive and not procedural).

In the instant case, the retroactive application of A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) to this proceeding would subject Respondent Jennifer Wallrich to the jurisdiction of the Commission, and would expose the Respondents' marital community to a claim for administrative penalties and other liabilities pursuant to A.R.S. §§ 44-2032(1) and 44-2036(A). Because this jurisdiction and liability would not exist but for the recent amendment to A.R.S. § 44-2031(C), the effect of that amendment is substantive rather than procedural and cannot be retroactively applied. A.R.S. § 1-244.

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The Joinder of Jennifer Wallrich in this Action Was Not Permissible Under Arizona's Community Property Laws Prior to the Enactment of 4. A.R.S. § 44-2031(C).

The Division argues in its Memorandum that substantive law is not being retroactively applied because, '[t]he marital community's liability for actions of one spouse is governed by Arizona's community property statutes." (Memorandum, p.5, lines 8-9.) This begs the question, however, of whether Respondent Jennifer Wallrich and the Wallrich marital community were liable for the claims alleged in this proceeding prior to the enactment of A.R.S. § 44-2031(C). Because the Commission previously had no jurisdiction over the spouse of an alleged violator, A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) creates new liability for conduct which allegedly occurred prior to the enactment of the statute.

It is well-settled in Arizona that, "[t]he Corporation Commission has no implied powers and its powers do not exceed those to be derived from a strict construction of the Constitution and implementing statutes." Commercial Life Ins. Co. v. Wright, 64 Ariz. 129, 166 P.2d 943 (1965). See also Kendall v. Malcolm, 98 P.2d 329, 404 P.2d 414, 417 (1965) ("We have held that the Corporation Commission of Arizona has no implied powers."); Burlington v. Arizona Corp. Com'n, 198 Ariz. 604, 12 P.3d 1208, ¶ 11 (App. 2000) ("Despite the Commission's argument to the contrary, the Commission has no implied powers, and its powers do not exceed those derived from a strict construction of the Constitution and the implementing statutes.").

While the Commission's specific constitutional power over the sale of securities is limited to inspection and investigation, Ariz. Const., art. 15, § 4, the legislature may enlarge or extend the powers and duties of the Commission over the subject matter of which it has already been given jurisdiction. Ariz. Const., art. 15, § 6; Commercial Life Ins. Co., 106 P.2d at 950. Where, as here, the Commission's authority does not come from the Constitution, but rather from the legislature, the courts will not imply any power beyond that expressly bestowed by the statute. Burlington, 12 P.3d at 1210, ¶ 11.

In the instant case, the jurisdiction and authority of the Commission derive from A.R.S § 44-2032, which provides in relevant part that:

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If it appears to the commission, either on complaint or otherwise, that any person has engaged in, is engaging in or is about to engage in any act, practice or transaction that constitutes a violation of this chapter, or any rule or order of the commission under this chapter, the commission may, in its discretion:

1. Issue an order directing <u>such person</u> to cease and desist from engaging in the act, practice or transaction, or doing any other act in furtherance of the act, practice or transaction, and to take appropriate affirmative action within a reasonable period of time, as prescribed by the commission, to correct the conditions resulting from the act, practice or transaction including, without limitation, a requirement to provide restitution as prescribed by rules of the commission.

A.R.S. § 44-2032(1) (Emphasis added).³

A.R.S. § 44-2032(1) provides the Commission with authority to issue cease and desist orders, and to order the payment of restitution and penalties, as against the person that has allegedly engaged in, is engaging in, or is about to engage in securities violations. The statute conveys no jurisdiction or authority over the spouse of an alleged violator, and none can be implied under established Arizona law. Accordingly, prior to the enactment of A.R.S. § 44-2031(C), the Commission had no express or implied jurisdiction over the spouse of an alleged violator, and no power or authority to issue orders binding on the marital community. Because A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) granted those powers to the Commission after the conduct and events at issue in this proceeding, the retroactive application of that statute would affect the substantive rights of Respondents and be manifestly unfair.

5. The Retroactive Application of A.R.S § 44-2031(C) in this Action Would Also Violate the Prohibition on Ex Post Facto Laws Contained in the United States and Arizona Constitutions.

The United States and Arizona Constitutions prohibit ex post facto laws. See U.S. Const. art. I, § 9; Ariz. Const., art I, § 10. A state may enact no law, "that changes the punishment, and inflicts a greater punishment than the law annexed to the crime, when committed." State v. Noble, 171

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³ Although the language of A.R.S. § 44-2032(1) quoted above was amended by 2002 Ariz. Sess. Laws, Ch. 157, § 15, effective August 22, 2002, those changes are minor and are not material to the issues presently before the Commission.

Ariz. 171, 173, 829 P.2d 1217, 1219 (1992) (quoting <u>Calder v. Bull</u>, 3 U.S. (3 Dall.) 386, 390, 1 L.Ed. 648 (1798)). See also <u>Saucedo v. Superior Court in and for the County of La Paz</u>, 190 Ariz. 226, 946 P.2d 908 (App. 1997).⁴

When engaging in ex post facto analysis, the first issue to consider is whether an enactment is being retroactively applied. See Noble, 829 P.2d at 1220; Saucedo, 946 P.2d at 910. "A law is retrospective if it 'changes the legal consequences of acts completed before its effective date." Noble, 829 P.2d at 1220 (quoting Miller v. Florida, 482 U.S. 423, 107 S.Ct. 2446, 96 L.Ed.2d 351 (1987). See also State v. Yellowmexican, 142 Ariz. 205, 688 P.2d 1097, 1099 (App.1984) (a law is retroactive if it "appl[ies] to events occurring before its enactment"). In the instant case, this requirement is clearly satisfied. The Securities Division seeks to apply an amendment to A.R.S § 44-2031 that became effective on August 22, 2002, to events that allegedly occurred in May of 2000 through May of 2001. (See Notice, ¶ 20.)

The next issue to consider is whether the statutory amendment being retroactively applied is "punitive or regulatory." See Noble, 829 P.2d at 1221; Saucedo, 946 P.2d at 910. If the enactment is "punitive either in purpose or effect," it may not be retrospectively applied. See Noble, 829 P.2d at 1221; Saucedo, 946 P.2d at 910. Here, the retroactive application of A.R.S § 44-2031 subjects Respondent Jennifer Wallrich and the marital community of Respondents John R. Wallrich and Jennifer Wallrich to various statutory liabilities, including the administrative penalties imposed by A.R.S. § 44-2036(A). The punitive effect of those penalties is clear.

A.R.S. § 44-2036(A) provides that any person found, in an administrative action, to have violated any provision of the Securities Act, "may be assessed an administrative penalty by the

⁴ The issue of whether a statute is an ex post facto law, although of constitutional proportion, is generally not reached by the courts if it is determined that the statute violates the mandate of § 1-244. See Coconino County Superior Court, 678 P.2d at 1391 (court declines ex post facto analysis when case can be decided on alternate state law ground of § 1-244); State v. Fallon, 151 Ariz. 188, 726 P.2d 604, 605, n. 1 (App.1986) (unnecessary to reach constitutional question of ex post facto violation because case could be decided on alternate state law ground of § 1-244).

commission, after a hearing, in an amount of not to exceed five thousand dollars for each violation." A.R.S. § 44-2036(A). The effect of multiplying the amount of the penalty by the number of violations greatly elevates the punitive effect of the penalty, and turns the focus of the assessment on the conduct of the alleged violator rather than the harm, if any, to the public. The payment of monetary penalties has historically been regarded as punishment and is commonly employed as a criminal sanction either in lieu of or in addition to incarceration. The payment of monetary penalties is also consistent with the traditional goals of punishment; namely, retribution and deterrence. Most importantly, the penalties prescribed by A.R.S. § 44-2036(A) do not serve any regulatory or remedial purpose because the monies collected by the Commission are remitted to the State Treasurer for deposit in the state general fund. A.R.S. § 44-2036(B).

Accordingly, because the sanctions and penalties sought to be imposed by the Securities Division against Respondent Jennifer Wallrich, and against marital community between Respondents John R. Wallrich and Jennifer Wallrich, are being retroactively applied and are punitive in both purpose and effect, the application of A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) to this proceeding would violate the prohibition on ex post facto laws contained in the United States and Arizona Constitutions.

6. The Relief Requested by the Division Would Exceed the Jurisdiction of the Commission Even if A.R.S § 44-2031(C) Could Be Retroactively Applied.

A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) provides that, "[t]he commission may join the spouse in any action authorized by this chapter to determine the liability of the marital community." A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) (Emphasis added). The statute, therefore, does not grant the Commission general personal jurisdiction over the spouse of an alleged violator, but instead, allows joinder of the spouse for the limited purpose of determining the liability of the marital community. Consistent with this limited statutory authority, the Division concedes in its Memorandum, albeit in a footnote, "that Jane Doe Wallrich was joined in the action solely to determine the liability of the marital community of Wallrich and Jane Doe

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⁵ The Division has alleged that Respondent John R. Wallrich has sold Alpha investment contracts involving at least 138 telephones to at least 28 individuals or entities, and will likely argue that each sale constituted a violation of the Securities Act. (Notice, ¶ 17.)

Wallrich for the actions of Wallrich." (Memorandum, p.2, fn. 1.) The relief requested by the Division its Notice, however, far exceeds the limited authority granted by A.R.S § 44-2031(C).

The Division's Notice alleges in ¶ 3 that Respondent Jane Doe Wallrich, "is joined in this action, pursuant to A.R.S. § 44-2031(C), to determine the liability of the marital community for the violations alleged herein." (Notice, § II, ¶ 3.) The Division's requested relief, however, includes the entry of a cease and desist order against Respondent Jennifer Wallrich personally, together with the entry of orders for payment of restitution and administrative penalties jointly and severally against both Respondents and against their marital community. (Notice, § VII, ¶¶ 1-3.)

To the extent that the Division's Notice seeks to impose the entry of a cease and desist order against Respondent Jennifer Wallrich in her personal capacity, and to the extent that the Notice seeks to recover awards of either restitution or administrative penalties from the separate assets and estate of Jennifer Wallrich, the Division has exceeded the authority granted in A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) and the jurisdiction of the Commission. Therefore, even if A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) could be retroactively applied in this action, the relief requested by the Division as against Respondent Jennifer Wallrich, beyond the determination of community liability, must be denied.

C. Conclusion.

Accordingly, Respondents submit that A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) cannot be retroactively applied to subject Respondent Jennifer Wallrich to the jurisdiction of the Commission and to subject the Wallrich marital community to liability and penalties for securities violations allegedly committed by Respondent John R. Wallrich prior to the effective date of the statute. Respondents further submit that retroactive application of A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) to the claims alleged in this matter would violate the prohibition on ex post facto laws contained in Article I, Section 9 of the United States Constitution and Article I, Section 10 of the Arizona Constitution. Finally, even if A.R.S. § 44-2031(C) could be retroactively applied to this case, the relief requested by the Division as against Respondent Jennifer Wallrich exceeds the jurisdiction of the Commission. Respondents therefore submit that the claims alleged by the Division as against Respondent Jennifer Wallrich should be dismissed.

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2	ROBBINS & GREEN, P.A.
3	By: My a
4	Wayne A. Smith Brian Impornoni
5	3300 N./Central Avenue, Suite 1800 Phoenix, AZ 85012
6	Attorneys for Respondents
7	Original and 13 Copies hand-delivered
8	this 18th day of February, 2003, to:
9	Docket Control ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION
10	1200 West Washington Phoenix, AZ 85007
11	Copy hand-delivered this 18th day of
12	February, 2003, to:
13	Hon. Philip J. Dion III Administrative Law Judge
14	ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION
15	1200 West Washington Phoenix, AZ 85007
16	Moira McCarthy
17	Assistant Attorney General ARIZONA ATTORNEY GENERAL'S
18	OFFICE 1275 W. Washington Street
19	Phoenix, AZ 85007
20	Kathleen Coughenour DeLaRosa SECURITIES DIVISION
21	1300 West Washington, 3rd Floor Phoenix, AZ 85007
	Mark Sendrow, Director
22	SECURITIES DIVISION
23	1300 West Washington, 3rd Floor Phoenix, AZ 85007
24	
25	CathyM. Wankoff

DATED this 18th day of February, 2002.